

editorial opinion

tinkering Around

by LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Tinker with trivia answers

CLANG, CLANG, CLANG.
That's the sound of a name dropping into the conversation. (And you thought that was the sound of a trolley car in a song from "Meet Me in St. Louis." Ask.)

Name dropping always was a favorite sport of young and old alike. Some persons blatantly make a living from scattering well-known names all over the place with the determination of Johnny Appleseed planting his trees.

Others, like historians taking shop at a party, are a wee bit more subtle about the business.

A good name-dropper will have his famous monikers float into a conversation as if they were attached to verbal parachutes.

Others, more determined, or perhaps supplied with malfunctioning parachutes, dump names into their conversation with the finesse of a householder hurriedly taking out the garbage.

STILL, OTHERS have developed the art of dropping a myriad of names into the same conversation. It's breathtaking to watch.

I once managed to endure a party where conversationalists were happy to play St. Augustine, Karl Marx and Charles Schulz into the same sentence. (Would you believe paragraph? Don't look now, but I just did the same thing.)

All of this talk about dropping names reminds me of the original intent of this column—to drop some names in answer to last week's trivia quiz. (April in Paris edition, remember.)

Who loved Camille?
Armand Duval was the young man smitten with courtesan Marguerite Gautier. Since she was fond of wearing camillas, she was known as the Lady of the Camillas, or Camille. Two points if you knew Armand's name.

Name Scarlett O'Hara's first two husbands. Rhett, if you remember, was number three.

Charles Hamilton, a fresh young boy who was killed early in the Civil War, was hubby number one for Scarlett. She married him to get even with Ashley Wilkes for marrying Melanie.

(Look, I never claimed she was rational.)

Next on the matrimonial trail was Frank Kennedy, an old maid type if there ever was one. He ran a small store when Scarlett first married him but she built it up into a more than thriving business.

TWO points for keeping correct track of Ms. O'Hara's escapades.

Who was Alice B. Toklas' friend?

Gertrude Stein was Toklas' friend. Two points for you if you knew Gertrude.

Who was the lover of George Sand (aka Aurora Dupin)?

Frederic Chopin is identified as one of her steady dates. That answer's worth two points. If you knew that George was an author, that on another point to your score.

Who did Heloise love?

Heloise should have taken the hint when her family disapproved of her relationship with Peter Abeldar, her teacher. But she didn't and the affair ended tragically for Abeldar. Heloise entered a convent. Peter entered a monastery. They kept in touch through a series of letters. Two points for you if you named Abeldar.

Who did Wallis Warfield Simpson love?

Edward, Prince of Wales became the Duke of Windsor for the sake of the woman he loved. (Yes, I realize he was an abdicating king when he made that statement, but if you won't be picky, I won't.) Two points for his answer.

WHO did Edward Rochester decide to marry. She was the governess of his niece.

Jane Eyre, of course. She was all set to marry him in the middle of the book of the same name but she discovered that he was keeping his first wife in the manor's tower. Wiley number one was quite mad, but that argument meant nothing to poor old Jane who tearfully left the place and went to live with some cousins.

Of course, she did return to Rochester just in time to supply author Charlotte Bronte with the three separate volumes her publishers demanded from one long story. (Almost as long as this answer.) Two points for guessing Jane and congratulations for reading this far.

Tristan was madly in love with the medieval maiden. What was her name?

Isolde. That little romance didn't quite work out either, I guess. It must have been difficult to be a medieval knight and settle for worshipping from afar. Two points for this answer.

Who did Cyrano de Bergerac love?

Cyrano had a complex about his nose and instead of pursuing the fair Roxanne himself, he helped his friend Christian win her hand. As usual, Cyrano accomplished the deed with panache. Two points if you answered Roxanne.

WHO WAS Lady Chatterly's lover? For a whopping two points, Lady Chatterly's gameskeeper was named Oliver Mellors. Oliver was the strong silent type, if you remember. Didn't like women as people, either.

Well, now that you've endured yet another chapter in Tinkering Around with Trivia, let us tally the total score. If you racked up 21 points, you should be writing these quizzes. That's impressive. Did you use a dictionary? Between 10-20 points, you're an expert. I would hesitate to say whether you're expert at dropping names or naming lovers. But you're expert. Since quality is slowly but surely losing value in today's world, I congratulate you.

If you totaled between 2-9, you're all right. You probably have better things to do than sit around remembering which characters connected with others. Since industry is admirable, I applaud you. Life, thank goodness isn't based upon your expertise at trivia quizzes. (But I'll accept your promise to do better on the next one.)

Never fear, the Trivia Tinker will return.

of large corporations with financing and extremely well-trained individuals. There is no way that small businesses can match this expertise, but the present law at least gives them an equal opportunity.

The new law would swing the pendulum very heavily in favor of unionization.

LLOYD JOHNSON
Whitehall Convalescent Home

Labor unions have grown to the size

Rich Gold writes

Trial and tribulation of a dog lover

Ah, the vagaries of pet ownership. Yesterday I launched me headfirst and unprepared into the world of criminal justice.

I own, or actually, am owned, by a four-legged blond mutt who shall herein be referred to as Woodrow, his given name; or the Woods, as his closer chums call him.

We live in Ann Arbor, but yesterday I got a summons to appear in 14th District Court in Ypsilanti.

The charge—dog at large.

But first, a little background.

A few days before the great blizzard, the hirsute Woods disappeared.

People are given to social climbing; children to tree climbing—the Woods to fence climbing, and so in the manner of Steve McQueen he made his great escape.

I can only assume the lad was overcome by irresistible primal urges. I say this not from firsthand knowledge, but from circumstantial evidence.

Overnight, the population of dogs roaming the neighborhood tripled, and in the days before the Woods disappearance, he was given to a great deal of whining, heavy panting and incessant whining.

I can hardly fault the beast. In all honesty I can only think of some of my human colleagues who will travel great distances pushed by what I assume to be the same implacable drives.

Lord knows, I have discussed this with the beast. At length I have explained that if I have to pay for his release, it means more dog chow and less of the moist, meaty, canned good stuff.

I had always thought the path of reasoning in dogs followed the digestive tract. Not so, it follows another physiological system.

Sometimes, I would even lecture the Woods harshly when my presumed reasoning failed.

The Woods is not given to subtlety. The sulking beast was quick to show his displeasure with my tone of voice, marking the furniture in the inimicable one-leg raised manner of dogs.

MORE TO THE POINT—the vicissitudes of daily life, and justice in America.

I put an ad in the local paper, frequented the humane society daily and scoured the neighborhood in vain for the Woods.

The lad, I feared, had perished in the blizzard. I started to give up hope.

My visits to the humane society became less frequent, response to the ad spotty.

Three weeks after his disappearing act, on one of my visits to the humane society, I finally found the blond bomber, looking sheepish and morose.

Somewhat the worse for wear, both he and I, I paid the humane society \$25 for his accrued room and board, and release.

cher for a chess partner and H.R. Block and Arthur Burns on retainer."

"THE HOME Computer Handbook," written by Edwin Schlossberg, John Brockman and Lyn Horton, describes just some of the ways a home computer can be used by the family.

"The computer can manage personal finances, balance checkbooks and evaluate investment portfolios."

"In the kitchen, it can be used for storing recipes, keeping a running inventory of groceries and count calories for dieters."

"It can help students with math, music theory and just about any other subject through programmed teaching methods."

"For fun, it can be programmed to play chess, backgammon and other games people play."

"A home computer also can be tied in with other computers to offer you a personalized computer-aided service, up-to-date news, stock reports and travel information."

"According to the book, the computers can be programmed to store heights, weights and diameters of all your friends and tell you who is calling at your front door."

These computers, already on the market, are slightly bigger than a

bread basket and sell for \$700 (or a bit) to about \$6,000 for a completely assembled model that presumably can do everything but trim your toenails.

COMPUTERS obviously cost more than pocket calculators and will be more difficult to operate than a clock radio. Many homeowners will shun the computers because of the cost and complications which are inherent in the machines.

But astronomer and futurist Carl Sagan writes that we humans cannot ignore the technological age and the gadgets which keep it humming. We are simply too advanced to revert to log cabins, candles and agrarian ways, Sagan says. We need the gadgets to keep up with the towering demands for food, clothing, shelter and human growth.

The computer, once an awesome, mysterious and incredibly expensive machine of superhuman powers, will soon become a familiar fixture in American homes, the authors of "The Home Computer Handbook" predict.

That may be hard to imagine. But 50 years ago, it was probably difficult to imagine a massed man galloping through New York apartment buildings or a 70-piece orchestra performing in an isolated farmhouse.



by Carl Stoddard

Einstein's in the kitchen

Fifty years ago, a bulky but rather ingenious friend was introduced to American homes. It was called a radio.

The device brought symphony orchestras to Iowa farm houses and the Lone Ranger to New York apartments. Radio was, in retrospect, a science fiction dream come true. And it was only the beginning of a new electronic age.

Once radio stuck its foot in the door of every American household, there was no stopping the flood of new gadgets: toasters, refrigerators, electric alarm clocks, vacuum cleaners, electric mixers. And then came television, electric blankets, trash compactors, garbage disposals, electric toothbrushes, blenders, blowers, mowers and dryers.

Now a new age is dawning. By 1985, experts are predicting that most American homes will be equipped with home computers. These computers will do more than bring the Lone Ranger into your home and eat garbage thrown down the sink.

The New York Times took a look at home computers and reported that "having a computer, the manufacturers imply, is like having Albert Einstein for a babysitter, Bobby Fis-



by Jackie Klein

"Around the edge" You can't stop the clock

If you want to feel really depressed on your birthday, get together with the girls into that trap Saturday, and there's nothing like it to give your ego an advanced case of paranoia.

I was going to meet the gals for lunch and wear my youngest looking dress and most concealing makeup. I had asked my beauty operator for an 18-year-old hairdo on my 46ish head (give or take a few years).

The first remark I was greeted with when I got to the restaurant was, "You were a year ahead of me in school. How old are you today?" It isn't too tough to lie. I've been doing it so long I have no idea how old I really am. I mumbled something like, "I'm much too young to be this old," accompanied by a nervous giggle. Nobody thought that was funny.

As the girls began drifting into the restaurant, I whipped out 28 pictures of my grandson. I expected everyone to faint because how can a grand-nephew be so young? Everyone was polite and raved about the child, but nobody fainted or even gasped.

"MY OPTOMETRIST tells me I have aging eyes," I uttered with a mixture of sarcasm, disbelief and bit-

terness. "I have to stand outside of the phone booth to dial a number but that has nothing to do with age."

"Have you tried bifocals?" some dingbat with 20-20 vision simps. "Oh no," I replied, horrified. "My doctor says I really don't have to wear glasses unless I want to see."

In spite of my protests, there are unmistakable signs of aging and here they are:

• When you use "Erase" to make the lines under your eyes disappear and they don't. They drop down to your neck.

• When you look for your glasses and you can't find them without wearing your glasses.

• When the high school teacher you thought was ancient when she was 40 seems a lot younger at 65.

• When your hormone cream doesn't make you look younger but your hair comes in thicker—on your face.

• When you blame your electric blanket for your hot flashes and your electric blanket is on "off."

• When you confide in your best friend that you're having an affair and she asks, "Who's the caterer?"

When people stop taking you and your 27-year-old daughter for sisters

and start thinking you and your 39-year-old cousin are mother and daughter.

• When you keep getting wrong numbers because you can't read the telephone book. That wouldn't be so bad if you could see the dial to call information.

• When policemen, firemen, mailmen and almost everybody else start looking younger and younger, and you love to be invited to parties where all the guests but you are over 55.

• When you think the "Carpenters" make cupboards, "The Ace Trucking Company" hauls appliances and "The Dog Night" is a nocturnal canine triangle.

• When the last dance you learned was the tango and your kids break up when you're doing the frog to "Sweet Lorraine."

• When you buy extra long and wide pants to hide your varicose veins, and all they do is make your hips look bigger.

• When you won't admit to gaining weight, but if you wear something red and blue, the mailman sticks a letter in your mouth.

• When the kids ask what is was like in the olden days and you know, I learned all this from my older friends.

He had been arrested in Ypsilanti, records showed, some 10 miles away.

I thought the tale ended there.

Yesterday, a week after Woodrow's return, I received the summons. Apparently we had been fingered by the humane society. So much for my sustaining membership fee, the additional \$25 I had donated in one of my earlier visits.

Rather than appearing in court and pleading guilty to his honor, I decided to see if I could merely mail the court a check for the beast's indiscretions.

Disposition of guilt by association should be so easy.

The woman at the other end of the phone informed me there was no standard fine for the ordinance violation. The decision would be left in the capable hands of the judge.

Often, the fine is \$25, she said, but other variables enter into the decision.

Fear surging through my blood, I asked what sort of variables.

The response was, "Oh, such stuff as recent traffic tickets in Ypsilanti and things like that."

THE CORRELATION escaped me, but justice works in mysterious ways.

If the judge believes me when I tell him I haven't jaywalked, mugged any old ladies, double-parked or drunk to excess in his fair town lately, I may escape without too much of a fine.

But this has been no frivolous matter. Affairs of the pocketbook rarely are.

As for the bottom line, the cost of the Woods' venal capers, I suspect it will be in excess of \$60.

And as I explained to Woodrow, that means no horsemeat and by-products for him, and no steak for me.

(The writer is an OAS copy editor.)

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